

**Comprehensive Services Act (CSA)
Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment
Implementation of Decision Support Model Pilot
July 1, 2011**

The Office of Comprehensive Services (OCS) is pleased to announce the pilot implementation of a decision support model incorporated into the online CANS system, CANVaS, effective July 1, 2011. Often referred to as an “algorithm”, a decision support model is programmed into the online system to read ratings on patterns of items in a child’s assessment and make a recommendation based on the research of John Lyons, Ph.D., the creator of the CANS. Although there are several CANS algorithms recommending various levels of needs, at this time only one has been incorporated into CANVaS for children and youth served by CSA.

The algorithm being implemented for use with children and youth served by the Comprehensive Services Act will suggest that the child being assessed either :

- 1) meets the level of need for either residential services or intensive community-based services in a therapeutic environment; or
- 2) does not meet this level of need, and the system will not provide any recommendation.

The results will simply indicate whether or not the assessment indicates that the child’s needs meet the criteria for the higher level of need, not the specific placement or services.

There are two very important qualifiers with this implementation. First, because of the structure of the system, the algorithm cannot be piloted in one, or several, localities but must be implemented statewide. Consequently, the first ninety days of implementation (July 1, 2011-September 30, 2011) will serve as a pilot. Family Assessment and Planning Teams (FAPTs) should carefully note the results of the algorithm and provide feedback to the Office of Comprehensive Services if the FAPT believes the system’s suggestion is not accurate for the child being assessed. The algorithm may need adjustment based on the specific needs and strengths of children and families served by CSA in Virginia. OCS will work with Dr. Lyons regarding any proposed adjustments. A form is attached to document this feedback.

Secondly, at no time, even after the completion of the pilot phase, should the recommendation generated by CANVaS override the professional judgment and expertise of the case manager, parents, FAPT members, Community Policy and Management Team (CPMT) members or other individuals that have knowledge regarding the child and family. Dr. Lyons, as developer of the CANS and the decision support models (algorithms), encourages service planning teams to view the recommendation generated by the system as simply one more piece of information that should be considered in making service decisions for a child and family.

Algorithm Implementation:

As noted above, the algorithm will recommend either:

- intensive community based services in a therapeutic setting OR residential services; or
- there will be no recommendation.

If the assessment indicates the child meets the level of need in the first bullet, the FAPT may consider implementing intensive community-based services in a therapeutic environment or placement in a residential treatment program. However, again, it is extremely important that the FAPT exercise its collective professional judgment and consider all of the factors and variables, such as the resources available in the community.

If the system generates “no recommendation” it simply means that the child did not meet this higher level of need, according to the algorithm. It certainly does not mean that the child and family do not have any needs. As in the past, the Family Assessment and Planning Team should consider whatever service mix it determines is warranted for this child and family. And it is quite possible that a FAPT would still determine a child needed a structured placement in a residential setting or intensive community based services in a therapeutic placement even though CANVaS does not generate this recommendation. The FAPT may be aware of other factors which it must consider in making the decisions about which services and/or placement will best meet the needs of the child and family.

Attached is a form that FAPTs should use to provide feedback to OCS regarding the implementation of the algorithm. Specifically, it will be helpful to know if the FAPT disagrees with the recommendation of the system and why. Please do not provide any child-specific identifying information. If clarification is needed, OCS will follow up with a contact person designated by the locality on the form.

Operation of the Algorithm

Case managers should continue to complete CANS assessments in CANVaS for children receiving CSA-funded services. Three questions have been added to the “General Questions” Section at the beginning of the assessment to better inform the algorithm results. The following questions are added: *Mark the rating by the correct response for each of the following questions.*

Community Based Services

Has the child received intensive community based services in the last six-months, and if so, were these services successful?

- ☐ 1) The child has not received community-based services.
- ☐ 2) The child has received community-based services and the services were successful.
- ☐ 3) The child has received community-based services and the services were not successful

Child Removal

Has a decision been made either by DSS or the local J&DR court to currently remove the child from home?

- ☐ 1-No, a decision has not been made.
- ☐ 2-Yes, a decision has been made.

Child's Age

- ☐ 1) The child is age 5-13.
- ☐ 2) The child is age 14-17.
- ☐ 3) The child is age 18 or older.

The “General Questions” section then continues with the questions regarding the child’s placement that have been in CANVaS. Please note that for the type of placement questions, if the answer is “no”, the item should be rated a “0”. If “yes, then the item should be rated a “1”.

Closing the Assessment

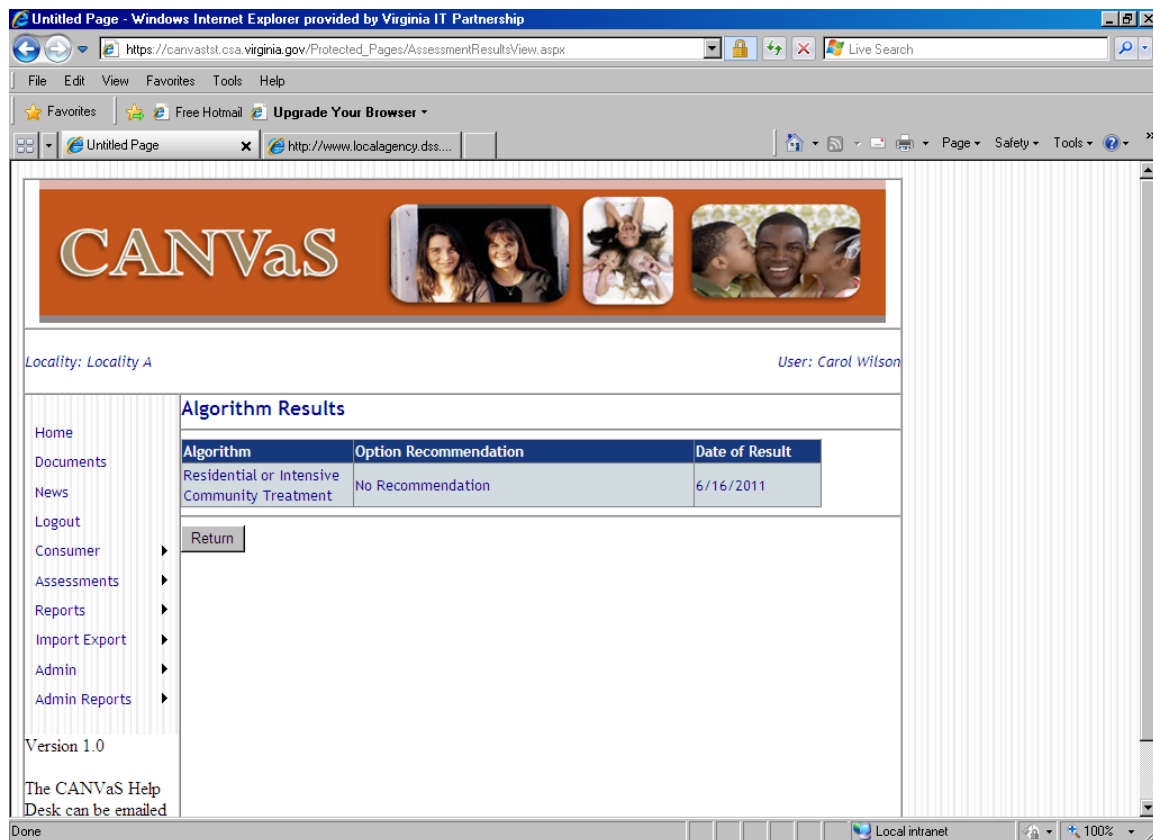
When the assessment is complete, the case manager should click the “check to close assessment” box at the bottom of the page in CANVaS. If there are items that should have been rated but were not, the system will prompt a response. If complete, the algorithm recommendation screen will appear. If the recommendation is prompted, the screen will look like:

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Untitled Page - Windows Internet Explorer provided by Virginia IT Partnership". The address bar shows the URL: https://canvastat.csa.virginia.gov/Protected_Pages/AssessmentResultsView.aspx. The browser's menu bar includes File, Edit, View, Favorites, Tools, and Help. The toolbar shows various icons for navigation and search. The main content area displays the CANVaS logo at the top, followed by three small images of children. Below the images, the text "Locality: Locality A" and "User: Carol Wilson" are visible. The main section is titled "Algorithm Results" and contains a table with the following data:

Algorithm	Option Recommendation	Date of Result
Residential or Intensive Community Treatment	Residential Treatment or Intensive Community Services	6/15/2011

Below the table is a "Return" button. On the left side of the page, there is a vertical menu with the following items: Home, Documents, News, Logout, Consumer, Assessments, Reports, Import Export, Admin, and Admin Reports. At the bottom of the page, it says "Version 1.0" and "The CANVaS Help Desk can be emailed". The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Done" and "Local intranet".

If there is no recommendation (the assessment does not indicate the child meets the higher level of need) the results screen will look like this:



If there is no recommendation (as noted in the second screen shot), the FAPT should determine whatever service mix is warranted. Again, it is possible that the FAPT may determine the child's needs require intensive community based services in a therapeutic setting, or residential placement, even if the recommendation is not generated. FAPT members should document the reasons for the decision and provide this information to OCS so it may be considered in the refinement of the algorithm.

At any time after the assessment is closed, the algorithm results may be retrieved by clicking on "view" on the specific assessment on the child's CANVaS page. When the assessment is opened, clicking on the "View Results" button on the bottom of any page of the assessment will display the algorithm results page.

Following successful implementation of the algorithm, the system will permit users to access other report features in CANVaS, specifically the individual outcome graphs and domain outcome graphs that are currently disabled.

If you have questions about the decision support model or its implementation, please contact your OCS Technical Assistance Coordinator (contact information on form) or Carol Wilson, OCS Policy Analyst.

***Comprehensive Services Act (CSA)
CANVaS Algorithm Pilot Feedback Form
Office of Comprehensive Services
July 1, 2011***

Please provide the following information. Do not include any identifying information about the child and/or family. Please use additional pages, if necessary.

Date of FAPT:

Locality of Family Assessment and Planning Team:

Algorithm Result Generated by CANVaS:

Reason(s) why the recommendation or the lack of the recommendation does not seem appropriate to members of the FAPT:

Contact Person (*person who OCS may contact for more information*)

Name

Phone Number

E-mail address

Please return this form to either your OCS Technical Assistance Coordinator or Carol Wilson, Policy Analyst.

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or mail to:

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